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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:
DAAG-PAP-A (N) (9 Aug 74)

(18) (19)
DAMO-6DU-712196

27 August 1974

Expires 27 August 1975

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne
Division (Airmobile) Period Ending 31 Oct 71 (U)

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AD531137

Operational rept. for ~~period~~ period ending 31 Oct 71

1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.

(10) George C. / Vinny

2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during active operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material, as appropriate. This report should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.

(12) 12p.

3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to the HQ DA (DAMO-6DU) Washington, D.C. 20310, within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

J. C. Pennington
J. C. PENNINGTON
Colonel, AGC
Acting The Adjutant General

1 Incl
as

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HEADQUARTERS 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION (AIRMObILE)
Office of the Chief of Staff
APO 96383

19 Nov 71

AVDG-CS

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division
(Airmobile), Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS: CSFOR-65(U)

Commanding General
XXIV Corps
ATTN: ATII-OCT
APO 96349

1. Withdrawn

2. (C) Lessons Learned; Commander's Observations, Evaluation and
Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Intelligence.

(1) Confirming Devices.

(a) Observations: Confirming devices utilized on 101st Abn Div sensors include the ACOUSID, Magid-T4 with MINISID, and AAU-MINISID combinations. The ACOUSID is used with the air-dropped ADSIDS.

(b) Evaluation: Confirming devices have proven to be a valuable asset to the Division Sensor Program to confirm what is actually there. All devices have operated effectively.

(c) Recommendations: The use of confirming devices should be expanded to all sensor strings within the Division TAOI.

(2) Expendable Sensor Relay.

(a) Observation: The EXRAY was hand-implanted and tested by the 1st Brigade on 19 July 1971. The test proved highly successful.

(b) Evaluation: The EXRAY provides monitoring capability for Brigade sensor strings in areas where it is impractical to utilize a monitoring site. This is particularly applicable to low level routes of infiltration where line-of-sight transmission between a sensor string and its monitor is not available. The 60 day battery life of the EXRAY was considerably shorter than that of most sensors, requiring frequent replacement of EXRAYS.

(c) Recommendations: The EXRAY should be extensively utilized at Brigade level when it becomes available. The EXRAY battery life should be increased to correspond with sensor battery life.

(3) IPW Liaison.

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Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile),
Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS: CSFOR-65

(a) Due to the disengagement of U.S. Forces and the assumption of a greater tactical role by ARVN Forces in Northern MR I it has become necessary for IPW teams to expand their liaison activities to maintain a flow of information comparable to earlier levels of operations.

(b) Evaluation: Close coordination must take place to ensure the exchange of information with ARVN and RVN agencies. Vietnamese procedures for processing of documents, equipment, prisoners, and detainees differ from those of U.S. Forces. Delays in transportation and communications have adversely affected the flow of IPW related information from ARVN agencies to U.S. intelligence agencies.

(c) Recommendations: It must be stressed to IPW Section personnel that close liaison with Vietnamese IPW agencies is necessary to capitalize on this lucrative source of information. Whenever possible, telephonic and electronic means of communications should be utilized to avoid delays inherent in a courier system. Further efforts must be made to inform ARVN and GVN agencies of the need for greater communication of information during the final phase of U.S. operations in Northern MR I.

e. Operations.

(1) Employment of the Integrated Observation System.

(a) Observation: The Integrated Observation System (IOS) has found to be effective in remote field locations where accurate survey is not available.

(b) Evaluation: In the early part of the reporting period, there were no fire bases in the division area of operations which offered good IOS employment opportunities. Rather than misuse the equipment, it was employed in field locations in conjunction with ground surveillance radar and a squad of infantry for security. The locations were those which allowed the IOS to sight on known landmarks, and thus determine its location by resection within tolerable limits. This method of field employment allowed maximum use of the instrument at times when surveyed locations were not suitable.

(c) Recommendation: That the employment of the Integrated Observation System not be confined to areas accessible to accurate survey.

(2) Movement Control.

(a) Observation: Before strict movement controls on QL-1 were initiated, an inordinate number of traffic accidents occurred between US and Vietnamese Nationals. These traffic accidents usually generated into confrontation situations. Moreover, unrestricted movement on QL-1 afforded US and Vietnamese blackmarketsteers/drug pushers unlimited opportunities for establishing contacts.

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(b) Evaluations: Illicit drug activities and serious incidents between US and Vietnamese Nationals were reduced substantially after strict movement controls were initiated.

(c) Recommendations: That vehicular traffic between base camps and civilian population centers be reduced to the minimum required for effective operations and that essential traffic be grouped at Military Police check points for travel on MSR's.

(3) Airmobile Rearm Points:

(a) Observation: During recent operations a requirement for highly mobile rearm points materialized. To meet this requirement shelves were constructed in conexas so that ready-to-load rockets and other ammo could be transported without damage or danger. In this way, as the operation progressed, the rearm points could be rapidly airlifted forward to meet commitments. Two such points were utilized at Birmingham and Mai Loc.

(b) Evaluation: Both points proved to be highly effective.

(c) Recommendation: If the situation warrants, this type of rearm point should be used in the future to insure timely support.

(4) Pioneer road traces reconnaissance.

(a) Observation: Difficulty was experienced in determining the proper alignment while cutting a new road, Route 326, through triple canopy jungle.

(b) Evaluation: On several occasions pioneers on the ground found themselves cutting traces into terrain which would not lend itself to the expedient cutting of a pioneer road. Although aircraft were utilized continually in an effort to keep the trace on course, it was found that a serial recon, even at low level, would not be accurate in determining contour beneath the triple canopy.

(c) Recommendation: More time must be allotted for an "on the ground" engineer recon prior to the start of any new road project. A security patrol must be provided by the supported unit to enable an engineer recon party to walk the proposed route. The recon team should have information from a low altitude recon to enable them to explore all possible routes and determine that most advantageous for construction.

d. Organization. None

e. Training. None

f. Logistics.

(1) Resupply of Class I.

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Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile),
Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS:

(a) Observation: The requirement to feed one hot meal per day is causing an overdrawn rations problem.

(b) Evaluation: Presently, the units resupply every four days. In some cases, due to bad weather, the logistics helicopters have been unable to deliver the hot rations. In order to insure that elements in the field have three meals per day for four days, units have continued to supply nine (9) C-Ration meals and three (3) LRRP meals per man. With the addition of the hot ration this means that four (4) meals are issued per man per day. This results in an overdrawn meal per man each day that hot rations are delivered.

(c) Recommendation: As long as one hot meal per day is required, during the monsoon (when delivery is uncertain) an additional ration allocation per day per man in the field should be authorized.

(2) Class II.

(a) Observation: Durability and availability of NOMEX gloves and NOMEX flight clothing was less than satisfactory during the period of this report. Many sizes of NOMEX clothing, especially in the small and medium categories (into which most aviators fall) are out of stock continually. Aviators and crew members are required to accept ill-fitting clothing in order to perform their mission. This causes a draw down on the sizes for which there is usually no high demand. This erroneous demand picture ultimately results in quantitative stockage of normally low demand sizes, while high demand sizes become less available. Lack of durability of NOMEX gloves is compounded by the shortage of these items. This short supply has been alleviated in the past by issue of large quantities of gloves to Property Book Officers for further issue to aviators and crew members. However, this supply has been depleted and there is no indication that bulk issues will meet anticipated demands.

(b) Evaluation: Availability of serviceable NOMEX clothing and gloves is of paramount importance to the aviation mission. Pilots and crew members may not fly without NOMEX clothing and gloves. Several pilots and crew members in this unit are performing the mission wearing gloves that have been eaten away by perspiration and JP-4. Although washing the gloves extends their life somewhat, it is only a temporary measure at best. Experience has proven that a pair of NOMEX gloves, worn daily, will last approximately 45 days for a pilot. Shorter equipment life for crew members is caused by their more frequent exposure to JP-4.

(c) Recommendations: That units be authorized to stock, at the Property Book level, sufficient NOMEX clothing and NOMEX gloves to provide an emergency DX capability. Recommended basis for stockage would be two sets of NOMEX clothing in each tariff size and two pairs of NOMEX gloves in each tariff size. This emergency supply could be used to DX flight clothing and gloves when the requirements of the mission prohibit the individual concerned from personally exchanging the items at the Central Issue Facility.

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Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS: CSFOR-65

g. Communications.

(1) OH6A radio and instruments.

(a) Observation: During the periods of heavy rain the OH6A's have increased radio and instrument problem directly related to moisture seeping within the instruments and radio compartment.

(b) Evaluation: Several methods have been sought to eliminate this problem. Possibly the one that has been more effective is the placing of a large sheet of plastic over the console and instrument panel. The plastic can be any of the various types found within an organization of this type. The plastic may easily be stored safely under one of the cockpit seats when not in use.

(c) Recommendation: That until a more desirable and effective method of waterproofing can be found, other units utilize this means of protection of the instrument panel and radio console.

(2) Corrosion of the RC-292 Antenna.

(a) Observation: It has been found that elements of the RC-292 antenna corrode after exposure to damp air, and that the components of the antenna head become water-logged.

(b) Evaluation: Either of these conditions will greatly reduce the effectiveness of the antenna, necessitates frequent inspection and repair.

(c) Recommendation: That the RC-292 antenna be constructed of a material less susceptible to corrosion, and that the head be made less susceptible to water-logging.

(3) Leakage of BA-30 Battery.

(a) Observation: With continuous use during periods when the temperature is high, leakage occurs in the BA-30 battery.

(b) Evaluation. It has been found that due to leaking batteries, malfunctions have occurred although the batteries were still serviceable. The leaking acid coats the battery terminals and prevents proper contact.

(c) Recommendation: That a more suitable seal be provided for the BA-30 battery in order to prevent leakage.

h. Material.

(1) OH6A Tail Rotor Blades

(a) Observation: OH6A Tail Rotor Blades still present constant maintenance problems. The onset of the monsoon season will add an additional burden on the supply system and the overall aircraft availability will be greatly affected.

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(b) Evaluation: In order to insure safe utilization of the fiberglass blades for the OH6A, inspections in accordance with TM 55-1520-214-20PMD must be performed daily. If separations are small, fiberglass can be used to rework tip caps and minor damage. This method of repair requires grounding of the aircraft for a minimum of eight hours as the blade repairs set. No spare tail rotors are authorized, although this would greatly decrease aircraft down time.

(c) Recommendation: That all-metal tail rotor blades for the CH6A should be introduced into the field as soon as possible. Those units with the highest consumption of fiberglass blades should be given the highest priority for receipt of these blades.

(2) Test Equipment.

(a) Observation: 34th GS Group Calibration team visits are insufficient to maintain the aircraft ground support test equipment.

(b) Evaluation: With all ground support test equipment requiring calibration every ninety (90) days and the 34th Group Calibration team visiting this area at ninety (90) day intervals, all test equipment requires calibration at the same time, which places a restriction on maintenance every three months.

(c) Recommendation: It is recommended that the 34th Group calibration team visits be placed on a 45 day basis to alleviate the problem of 100% of the test equipment requiring calibration at the same time.

i. Other.

(1) Aviation Safety

(a) Observation: A number of incidents and precautionary landings during the past six months have been attributed to material failure and unsatisfactory pre-flight inspections.

(b) Evaluation: The OH6A's have experienced a disproportionate number of mishaps with respect to the number of hours flown. The cause of these mishaps stems from maintenance deficiencies and incomplete pilot inspections of the aircraft. Review of these mishaps indicated that flight and maintenance personnel are not exchanging information pertaining to the cause of these mishaps. The result of this lack of communication is unnecessary recurrence of similar incidents.

(c) Recommendation: Whenever possible, Unit Safety Officer should provide liaison between maintenance and flight personnel and recommend guides which emphasize thorough inspections of components with a history of material failure. Information should be expeditiously disseminated to all personnel.

(2) Retro-reflective Slurry (RRS) Monitoring.

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Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile),
Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS: CSFOR-65

(a) Observation. Many nationals, attempting to smuggle contraband through the gates into base camps, will discard these items before being monitored.

(b) Evaluation. The original purpose for monitoring, to detect traces of the slurry picked up by people trespassing in unauthorized areas, has been made obsolete by the degradation of the slurry throughout the division AO by weather. The slurry is no longer available, but monitoring should continue. The last three monitoring sessions have yielded 61 vials of heroin, 1 vial of unknown substance and thirty cents in US currency.

(c) Recommendation. That the division Provost Marshal, with technical assistance from Division Chemical, continue to schedule these monitoring sessions at entrances to base camps.

(3) Use of contaminated diesel for vegetation suppression.

(a) Observation. Although spraying of contaminated diesel is the only method available in areas where herbicide agents are prohibited, the aerial spraying of contaminated diesel to suppress vegetation in perimeter wire has not yielded any appreciable positive results.

(b) Evaluation. Contaminated diesel cannot be dispensed in heavy enough concentration on the vegetation, from the air, to sustain a fire, or to kill the vegetation. Although the use of contaminated diesel from ground-based sprayers is still helpful, this use is greatly limited by the terrain.

(c) Recommendation. That aerial spraying of contaminated diesel be discontinued and research continue to find an acceptable substitute for herbicide agents.

(4) Aerial Flame Drops.

(a) Observation. It has been found that a small ration of contaminated/excess petroleum products to thickened fuel, can be used effectively in aerial flame drops.

(b) Evaluation. If the fraction of contaminated/excess petroleum products is kept to a ration of 2:7 or 3:6, 4% thickened fuel in 55 gallon drums, the effectiveness of the bulk flame sortie is not degraded. In fact, due to a longer sustained burn, the effectiveness may be enhanced depending on the nature of target. Flame drops using the above ratios of 55-gallon drums of contaminated oil and excess asphalt blender have been employed successfully. This procedure not only provides an outlet for use of unwanted petroleum products but also allows for conservation of 4% thickened fuel.

(c) Recommendation. Excess and contaminated petroleum products continue to be made available for tactical use in bulk flame drops.

(5) Preparation of thickened fuel.

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Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile),
Period Ending 31 October 1971, RCS: CSFOR-65

(a) Observation. The large amount of 4% thickened fuel needed to support the division's tactical flame drops requires - fast, efficient, large-scale method of mixing. This is accomplished by bubbling compressed air through the mixture of MOGAS and thickening compound.

(b) Evaluation. The AN-M4 compressor, with an outlet hose of three branches, has been used to mix 4% thickened fuel with minimum effort by bubbling air through 55-gallon drums containing MOGAS and thickening compound. With M-4 thickener, the time required to produce 165 (3 x 55-gallon drum) gallons of 4% thickened fuel is about 5 minutes. This method has proven to be a fast, efficient, and dependable means of producing the large quantities of 4% thickened fuel required for combat operations.

(c) Recommendation. That this method be further studied for application on a large scale, adaptation as a standard procedure, and possible application on the M-4 Flamethrower Service Unit.

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AVII-GCO (19 Nov 71) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), Period Ending 31 October 1971 RGS CSFOR-65 (RJ) (U)

DA, Headquarters, XXIV Corps APO 96349 11 JAN 1972

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, APO 96375

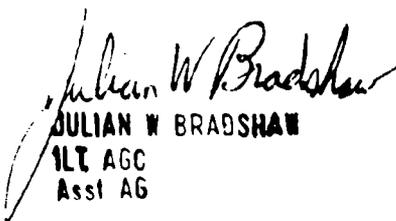
1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1971 from Headquarters, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and concurs with the report except as indicated in paragraph 2 below.

2. Comments Follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Retro-reflective slurry (RRS) Monitoring" page 6, paragraph 21 (2): Concur, however the following comment is made. This observation and evaluation is misleading without further explanation. The operation described is not retro-reflective slurry (RRS) monitoring, because there is no slurry available in RVN. The operation can be better described as a psychological operation. Vietnamese nationals are periodically subjected to passing in front of a black light prior to entrance into base camps. Some nationals, not knowing what type of test they are undergoing, become afraid and drop their contraband outside before entering. The deception can be, made even more effective by periodically detaining a national in full sight of other nationals. The same psychological effect could be obtained by using any technical looking device that the nationals are not familiar with and are therefore afraid of. The black light itself serves no detection function except a psychological one.

b. Reference item concerning "Resupply of Class I," page 3, paragraph 2 f(1): Nonconcur. Mess stewards can make appropriate corrections on DA Form 2970 to correct overdrawn situations thereby eliminating any requirements for an extra ration issue.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JULIAN W BRADSHAW
1LT AGC
Asst AG

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AVHDO-DO (19 Nov 71) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division
(Airmobile), Period Ending 31 October 1971 RCS CSFOR-65 (R3) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375 12 MAR 1972

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-FD,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1971 from Headquarters, 101st Airborne Division and concurs with the exception of item concerning "Class II," paragraph 2f(2), page 3: Nonconcur in recommendation. Establishment of a Flight Issue Section by G-4, 1st Avn Bde, has greatly reduced the problem of supply of NOMEX clothing. This section obtains subject clothing from USA Depot, Long Binh Post and issues direct to the using units. DSU's are no longer involved with this type clothing. The vast majority of US Army Aviation units in RVN are presently being supplied through this activity.

2. Additional comment follows:

Reference item concerning "Other," paragraph 2i(1), page 6: Concur with the recommendation, however, USARV Supplement 1 to AR 385-10 prescribes that aviation unit commanders will hold a unit safety meeting once each month. This is an appropriate time for maintenance personnel and the safety officer to exchange information. In addition, unit commanders provide guidance and directives during staff meetings with the safety officer, maintenance officer and subordinate commanders concerning safety procedures for their units. Aviation safety is a command responsibility and the unit safety officer can only advise the commander.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

[Handwritten signature]
P. A. KEENAN
Captain, AGC
ASST AG

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